

Background for a Minute on Immigration Reform and the Plight of Refugee Children Crossing the Border

Immigration, and the plight of refugee children crossing the border, have become a growing concern among Friends in Pacific Yearly Meeting. The Latin American Concerns Committee of PYM has appointed a special subcommittee devoted to this concern; and the Casa de los Amigos in Mexico City is deeply involved in immigration and migrant issues. Four Meetings—Santa Barbara, Inland Valley, Humboldt and Redwood Forest-- have approved minutes of concern regarding the plight of refugee children crossing the border and there will be an interest group on this topic at Yearly Meeting session this summer. The Peace and Social Order of Orange Grove Meeting shares this concern and approved bringing this minute to Orange Grove business meeting for its consideration.

As Friends, we believe there is “that of God” in every individual—whether born in the United States or elsewhere—and therefore support the efforts of the AFSC and FCNL to promote humane and fair immigration reform. In order to be effective advocates for immigrants among us, we encourage Friends to study the material provided by the AFSC:

<http://www.afsc.org/resource/just-and-humane-comprehensive-immigration-reform> and also http://fcnl.org/issues/immigration/advocate_for_refugees_at_border/

We are especially moved by the plight of mothers and children crossing our borders to escape from violence in their home countries and encourage Friends to support local, state and national efforts to insure they are treated humanely.

"The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God. " *–Leviticus 19:34*

Minute of action for the Orange Grove Meeting Yearly Meeting

We ask our clerk to send a letter to elected officials urging them to consider children and mothers crossing the border from Central America as refugees, thereby allowing for their access to resources and protection in accordance with the Human Trafficking law. We call upon the executive and legislative branches of our government to work together towards a comprehensive immigration reform program that will adequately address the unique issues associated with these refugees, such as the need for legal representation and humane treatment.

We also call up on our elected officials to pass comprehensive immigration reform that provides a path to citizenship for parents whose children are American citizens, as well as for those who were raised and educated in the United States but were born elsewhere, the so-called Dreamers. We believe that undocumented residents living and working in our country deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.